

Dear companions at the Table,

What makes for an excellent parish? In a recent article in *Church* magazine (David DeLambo, “In Search of Pastoral Excellence,” Summer 2007), five characteristics seemed to be most descriptive of excellent parishes: (1) preaching that connects Scripture to daily life; (2) attending to the needs of the sick, homebound, and bereaved, (3) having a pastor and staff energized and enthusiastic about ministry, (4) liturgies that are prayerful, reverent, and spiritually moving, and (5) engaging in outreach to the poor. I find it fascinating that of the five top descriptors of excellent parishes, two have to do with liturgy and two with social justice/charity. As the pioneers in the Liturgical Movement never tired of reminding us, liturgy and justice are intimately connected—and when practiced with intention, they make for vibrant communities of faith. As Pope Benedict has reminded us, the Eucharist is not only to be believed and celebrated, but also lived.

Thank you to those parishes that sent in suggestions for observing All Saints/All Souls. I plan on putting those suggestions in the *LiturgyNotes* next year in anticipation of the November feasts. If any parishes still want to send in their practices, please e-mail me—and we’ll file them for next fall!

May I please invite you to keep the men discerning a call to diaconal ministry—as well as their wives and children—in your prayers? We will be holding a series of meetings around the diocese to introduce the diaconate and explain the formation program to those who are discerning such a call. This month we meet at St. Joseph, DeWitt, from 1pm-4pm on November 18; next month we have our final meeting at the Chancery (St. Vincent Center), on December 16.

Finally, I would also ask you to keep the family of Deacon Jerry Timmerman in your prayers. Deacon Jerry was laid to rest on All Souls Day—a fitting time, given the dedicated service that he gave to his parish and the diocesan Church. We’ll miss having you at the chancery front desk, Jerry. May you receive the welcome that awaits every good and faithful servant!

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION...

First, please note that after hearing from the Presbyteral Council the Bishop has asked that the schedule for the Chrism Mass be changed this year. This liturgy will be celebrated on Monday, March 10 (not Tuesday) at 5:30 p.m. (not 4:00 p.m.) at St. John Vianney, Bettendorf (not the Cathedral). Please adjust your calendars accordingly.

Second, there was an error in the liturgical calendar I sent out with the *LiturgyNotes* last month. As previously announced, the Easter Vigil may not begin before 8:00 p.m. this year. The calendar listed 8:30, which is incorrect. My apologies for any confusion. A revised calendar is attached.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MULTI-CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS

Our Lady of Guadalupe

St. Mary of the Visitation, Ottumwa, will celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 9 at 12:45 p.m. The Mass will be followed by a potluck. They will celebrate their usual 5:15 p.m. Mass on the 12th as well.

St. Patrick, Iowa City, will celebrate the feast day with Bishop Amos at 12:30 p.m. on Dec. 9.

Lunar New Year (Tet)

The Vietnamese Community at Sacred Heart Cathedral will be celebrating the Lunar New Year with Mass at 2:00 p.m. on February 3, 2008. Bishop Amos will preside, and all are welcome.

CONTINUING FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES:

Cantor Workshops

Patti McTaggart, music minister at St. Mary, Iowa City, and member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, is available to conduct workshops for cantors and music ministers around the diocese. Please give her a call at 319-337-4314 or e-mail her at pmctaggart@icstmary.org for more information or to schedule a date.

Enter the Song: a music workshop. There will be a cantor/Instrumentalist workshop sponsored by the Archdiocese of Dubuque on Saturday, February 2, 2008 from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at St. Stephen Student Center in Cedar Falls. This workshop addresses the role of cantors and accompanists in leading and facilitating sung prayer. A keynote will be given by Dr. David Pitt of Loras College. Four breakout sessions will be offered. All experienced music ministers and those who wish to become cantors and accompanists will benefit from this workshop. For more information, please contact the worship office in Dubuque (1-800-876-3546).

Workshops for Readers/Lectors

Ken Miller, from St. John Vianney, Bettendorf, is available to help prepare readers/lectors for their ministry. Please contact him at kencathymiller@msn.com or 563-332-8404 if you are interested in having him present a workshop at your parish.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCE

I would like to introduce a couple of books from a collection known as the “Come and See Series,” published by Sheed & Ward or Rowan and Littlefield. According to the series editors, the “series offers spiritual seekers lively, thought provoking, and accessible books that explore topics of faith and the Catholic Christian tradition.” I have had the pleasure of reading two books in the series, and would highly recommend them for individual study or for an adult study group.

The first is *Bread of Life, Cup of Salvation: Understanding the Mass* by John F. Baldovin, SJ. If you have to suggest one book to help people really understand what it is that we do at Mass, this is the one. It is an accessible book on the Eucharist that fosters an adult understanding of the liturgy with the end of “full, conscious, and active participation” in mind. The author expertly presents the history, teaching, and practice of the Church while avoiding blind rubricism on the one end and a “do whatever you want” approach to the Church's worship on the other.

The second is *How Do Catholics Read the Bible?* by Daniel Harrington, SJ. This master scripture scholar has produced an understandable and comprehensive synopsis of Catholic teaching on the Scriptures. An excellent resource for both preachers and teachers, it presents the Catholic approach to the Bible—a rich and varied approach that is a far cry from (in the words of the Pontifical Biblical Commission) the “intellectual suicide” of fundamentalism.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS

The Precatechumenate and Catechumenate

As the name implies, the *Rite* of Christian Initiation of Adults is marked by the liturgical celebration of the journey towards full initiation through the Easter Sacraments. Most RCIA teams are well aware that the transition from the Precatechumenate to the Catechumenate is celebrated through the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens (RCIA §§ 41-74), and that the transition from Catechumen to one of the Elect is celebrated in the Rite of Election, preceded by the Rite of Sending (§§ 106-117). There are analogous celebrations for those baptized in other Christian communities who are journeying to full communion (§§ 411-458).

During the Catechumenate (see §§ 75-80 for introduction), a number of other rites are available for those not baptized that you may want to use. A number of these may be celebrated by the catechist rather than requiring an ordained minister; please see the texts in question for details.

- Celebrations of the Word of God (§§81-89)
- Minor Exorcisms (§§ 90-94)
- Blessing of Catechumens (§§ 95-97)
- Anointing of Catechumens (§§ 98-103).

In addition, the Presentation of the Creed and Lord's Prayer may be celebrated during this time if necessary (§§ 104-5).

LITURGY AND JUSTICE

Green Mountain Monastery, Vermont, blessed with an abundance of balsam fir trees, offers Christmas Wreaths sustainably hand-harvested from monastery and neighboring lands. Proceeds go toward supporting the work of the monastery with a portion tithed to VAMOS, a grassroots group that gives direct help to the poor of Mexico. Wreathes are 18-20" with bow and pine cone for \$25 plus shipping. Visit <http://www.greenmountainmonastery.org/hands.htm#wreaths>
For more about religious communities on the land, visit <http://www.ncrlc.com/religiouscommunitiesland.html>

LITURGY PREPARATION

LITURGICAL CALENDAR

Feast of the Anniversary of the Cathedral's Dedication

The Anniversary of the Dedication of the Cathedral is observed as Feast in the diocese. Therefore, Masses celebrated on Thursday, November 15, should be taken from the Common of the Dedication of a Church, 2. Anniversary of Dedication, B. Outside the Dedicated Church. The Preface for Dedication of a Church II (P53) is used. The readings are taken from the Common of the Anniversary of the Dedication of a Church, found in volumes II, III, or IV of the Lectionary, readings number 701-706. At the Cathedral itself, it is celebrated as a Solemnity—and has been moved to Sunday, November 18.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, observed from January 18-25, invites the whole Christian community throughout the world to pray in communion with the prayer of Jesus “that they all may be one” (John 17:21). The theme for this year's Week of Prayer is “Pray without ceasing,” taken from 1 Thess 5:12a, 13b-18. For more information and for resources, please go to http://www.geii.org/wpcu_index.htm.

Thursday, January 22: Day of Penance (see GIRM #373)

The anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision is observed in all dioceses of the United States as a particular day of penance for violations to the dignity of the human person committed through acts of abortion, and of prayer for the full restoration of the legal guarantee of the right to life. The Mass “For Peace and Justice” (#22), from “Masses for Various Needs and Occasions” should be used. The readings are taken from the Lectionary, volume IV, #887-891. The Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs and Occasions IV is suggested. Violet vestments are to be worn. Resources for observing this day can be found on the USCCB website: <http://www.usccb.org/prolife/anniversary.shtml>

INTERCESSIONS

(1) “Intercessions for Life” may be found on the USCCB website at:

<http://www.usccb.org/prolife/liturgy/wolarchive.shtml>

(2) Monthly intercession for vocations:

That, rooted in Christ, we would all listen with open hearts to the voice of the Spirit. We pray...

(3) Weekly intercessions from the Liturgical Commission:

Dec 2 1st SUNDAY OF ADVENT

That we join the efforts of those who struggle to beat swords into plowshares, we pray to the Lord...

Dec 9 2nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

That we heed the call of John the Baptist to “reform our lives” and follow the way of the Gospel, we pray to the Lord...

Dec 16 3rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT

That we do our part to help the blind see, the deaf hear, and cure the sick, whether in body, mind, or spirit, we pray to the Lord...

Dec 23 4th SUNDAY OF ADVENT

That we offer compassion to all women who face motherhood alone, without husband or family to support them, we pray to the Lord...

Dec 25 CHRISTMAS

For all children born this night(day), especially refugees around the world and the homeless in our land, we pray to the Lord...

Dec 30 HOLY FAMILY

For the children of Darfur, of Iraq, of Israel, of Palestine, and all places of war and terror, that families may soon live in peace and safety, we pray to the Lord.

If you have received this newsletter in error, or no longer wish to receive *LiturgyNotes*, please contact Laurie Hoefling at the chancery and request to be removed from our distribution list.

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